

Kidventure Camps Revises Programs to Address Declining Mental Health of Youth in Its 30th Anniversary Year

Kidventure Camps celebrates its 30th anniversary year with enhanced intentionality in its curricular and programming to promote mental wellness of youth.

AUSTIN, TEXAS, USA, May 17, 2024

/EINPresswire.com/ -- [Kidventure](#) Camps, a pioneer as a provider of summer camp experiences for youth, announces freshly revised curriculum and programming to address the decline in mental health of youth as it launches its thirtieth summer of camps. The family-owned company built its renown in hosting back-to-basics summer and after-school programming for youth aged 3-17 since 1994. Utilizing outdoor games, natural environment exploration, and creative activities, Kidventure established a trusted presence in Houston, Austin, and Dallas at dozens of locations.



Kidventure Celebrates Its 30th Anniversary

"Our longevity is testament to the enduring legacy of traditional means of engaging children: through physical movement, the constant inspiration of personal growth, the persistent emphasis on fostering teamwork, and in instilling a lifelong love for the outdoors," said Ryan Isbrecht, Kidventure Dallas-Forth Worth Camps Coordinator said.

Kidventure has remained at the forefront of the summer camp industry, now operating in 31 locations statewide.

"We have always been a launching pad for young explorers, building character and confidence, and leaving an indelible mark on their lives," said Mike McDonell, President of Kidventure. "But recently our programs have been reviewed, revised, and in some cases augmented as we deemed beneficial, to address the heartbreaking trends we are hearing from the medical and psychological communities about the mental health of our kids," McDonell stated.

The CDC reported in 2023 that the mental health of youth in the United States was in decline, a

trend that coincided with the cohort's dramatic uptick in the adoption of smartphones and social media.

Kidventure was founded in 1994, 13 years before the iPhone was introduced, and around 12 years prior to the ubiquity of social media. "We have seen a lot of societal changes in thirty years, but what we know for sure is that kids still need this camp experience - perhaps now more than ever," McDonell said.

"Camp creates a unique opportunity for our kids by fostering personal growth, resilience, and building connections, which is vital, now more than ever, to enhance their own mental health and wellbeing," said Taylor Blunsen, LCSW, a pediatric mental health professional in Austin, Texas.

I really believe that if we work together we can reverse some of the harm that the pressures of our society have inflicted. Now that we know better, we have to do better.
-Mike McDonell,
President of Kidventure

30th Anniversary

KIDVENTURE SINCE 1994
30 YEARS OF THE KV WAY

PRESS RELEASE: Kidventure Camps revises curriculum and programming to address the decline in mental health of youth.

Kidventure worked with child therapists who consulted on ways to optimize camp programming and training to address the current mental health crisis youth are facing. In reviewing camp curriculum through the lens of mental wellness, we have an even sharper focus and mandate in developing and harnessing "camp" tools to build emotional and psychological resilience when facing stressors in their lives. Campers and leaders

Adolescents are experiencing a mental health crisis.

In 2021
2 out of every 5 students experienced emotional distress

LGBQ students were
5X more likely to attempt suicide during the pandemic

Source: Adolescent Behaviors and Experiences Survey, 2021

KIDS NEED CAMP. KIDS NEED ADVENTURE. KIDS NEED KIDVENTURE. NOW MORE THAN EVER.

Kidventure Press Release

McDonell stated that the recent revisions will deepen the campers' embrace of the outdoors, authentic connections with others, and the building of a "wellness toolbox" as a means to develop resilience in times of anxiety and depression, and to return themselves to their "summer camp" joy and confidence.

“

Kids need camp. Camp promotes wellness. We want to empower youth to be resilient, harness the wellness tools they acquire at camp, and use them to combat the stressors they encounter in their lives,”

Mike McDonell, Founder and President of Kidventure

“One example of our renewed focus on wellness is to take a moment on our hikes or in our field and craft activities full of laughter, to remind them of their feeling of well-being, confidence, and joy. We remind them how they got there - by putting the devices away, getting outside, and letting their natural hunger for exploration lead them,” McDonell said.

“It can feel hard for kids to feel that they matter in a world

as big and complicated as ours., stated Kristin Morrison, M.Ed., M.A., an Educational Consultant and Founding Director of Houston-based Mindful Learning. “Every child needs to feel that they belong and that they matter. Camp experiences allow children to connect through experiences that foster fun and encourage personal growth in real and meaningful ways,” she added. “The

need for real and meaningful experiences has never been more crucial than now.”

McDonell said he has been increasingly concerned about the trends, which has deepened his passion for creating opportunities that promote wellbeing. “I really believe that if we work together we can reverse some of the harm that the pressures of our society have inflicted. Now that we know better, we have to do better,” McDonell said.

“It’s a simple mandate: we provide children with experiences that build self-confidence, form lasting friendships, and create unforgettable memories in a safe and supportive environment,” Isbrech said. And now, we intentionally guide our campers and leaders alike in getting back to that ‘good place’ when the world’s stressors hit,” Isbrech added.

The company’s website outlines special events taking place this summer to commemorate the 30-year milestone, including the Campfire Gala and the launch of the Wright-Power Scholarship Fund.

"We are just immensely proud to celebrate 30 years of Kidventure Camps, and our purpose is crystal clear. Kids need camp. Camp promotes wellness. We want to empower youth to be resilient, harness the wellness tools they acquire at Kidventure, and use them to combat the stressors they encounter in their lives," McDonell states. "We are thrilled to bring thousands of kids on awesome adventures for the thirtieth summer in a row," he added.

For more information on Kidventure, visit www.kidventure.com for event details and registration information.

About Kidventure Camps:

Kidventure Camps has been a trusted provider of summer camp experiences for children for three decades. With a dedication to fostering personal growth, teamwork, and a love for the outdoors, Kidventure continues to be a leader in youth development and adventure-based education. Kidventure operates 31 campsites, six after-school programs, and Overnight Camp in the Texas Hill Country. This past year, Kidventure served approximately 9000 children in its programs.

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